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text. It is true, the words *et in aiudha et in cadhuna cosa* are not in the corresponding German passage, but as they are only an unnecessary attribute of the verb *salvar** (unnecessary, because *salvar* taken in its general acceptance is synonymous with *salvar in cadhuna cosa*) their omission is of no consequence. It is quite different when we read with Clédat *et in aiudha er in cadhuna cosa*. Then this attribute which could be left out has become a new clause conveying a new idea. The supposition that a whole sentence of the French Oath could have been omitted in the German text, is something I cannot admit.

After these objections I think it unnecessary to insist upon the graphical difficulties (which are greater than M. Clédat intimates), and upon the fact that his correction makes another emendation necessary, namely, the insertion of the pronoun *li*.

J. STÜRZINGER.

Bryn Mawr College.

A History of German Literature, by W. SCHERER. Translated from the third German edition by MRS. F. C. CONYBEARE, edited by F. MAX MÜLLER. New York, 1886. 2 vols. 12mo. Charles Scribner's Sons.

The reviewer may well feel satisfaction and pleasure in undertaking his office on the present occasion. The long felt want of a good history of German literature in English has finally been met by an excellent translation of the best work now existing in the German language.

The marvellous success of Prof. Scherer's book in Germany has been well deserved. It had to compete not only with works of long standing and good repute, but also with those literary picture-books which have recently become so fashionable. The fact, however, that within four years four editions have been called for is sufficient proof of the principal merit of Scherer's work: its originality.

A reform in the method of writing the history of literature was very much needed. The manufacturers of those books which annually crowd the German market borrowed not only the ma-

terial but the form from their great masters: Gervinus, Koberstein, Wackernagel, and Kurz. But these, though priceless treasures for the student and investigator, do not meet the present requirements of historical science. History written with political or religious tendencies is scarcely scientific, nor will the scientific compilation of facts be called history. If the history of literature deals with the ideal life of a nation as reflected in its poetry, if the laws of historical investigation must be applied to represent this, then it seems almost obvious what method is to be followed. We do not look for a careful, chronological enumeration of all the documents, as we find it in Koberstein and Kurz, for that may be left to the notes; we do not care merely for the brilliant but disconnected reflections and criticisms of a powerful mind like Gervinus; we want an *organic representation* of the national poetic development. For in spite of rise and decline in the poetical history of a nation, the true historian believes in development, and although he cannot account altogether for the sudden appearance of great poets, he will not yield, like Vilmar, to the superstitious belief in the miraculous powers of genius.

Prof. Scherer is especially called to write a history of literature. Long ago he was known as an excellent philologist trained in Lachmann-Müllenhoff's school, and we can see by numerous acute observations how much benefit he derives from his philological knowledge in the way of throwing light upon his subject. A number of monographs, giving the results of his researches in different periods of German literature, have provided him with the knowledge of detail necessary for the historian who disdains to copy his predecessors. The author commands a charming style, which, though at times somewhat too journalistic, appeals to the wide circle of the educated. For, unlike some of his anchoretic colleagues, he is aware that science, unless brought into connection with national life, becomes Alexandrianism, and life without science ends in barbarism. And above all Prof. Scherer is endowed with the gift that places the historian next to the poet. He knows how to penetrate the spirit of a period as well as that of an individual, he understands how to find the secret connection of movements and motives back of

*The German word for *salvar* is *haldan*; both mean "to sustain" and not "to defend" as M. Clédat has it.

the literary phenomena, and he has the power of representing that organic unity thus attained, which, to our conception, is the highest aim of historical art.

The danger of subjectivity, of course, is not excluded, and we do not think that Scherer always escapes it. But, as a whole, his picture of the literary development of the German nation comes nearer to the truth than any one heretofore given.

The arrangement and grouping of the vast material displays from the outset the masterly skill of the author; we gladly observe that in this he was led by intrinsic and artistic rather than by arbitrary motives. Each chapter, representing some greater or minor movement of ideas in the different periods, adds to the compactness of the picture and enables the reader to penetrate and overlook with the author the whole development. While thus following the leading ideals, he distributes light and shade in a truly artistic manner, either by leaving out unimportant documents or by calling attention to literary phenomena hitherto considered of no account. He spares the reader, for example, an enumeration of the endless clerical literature of the 11th and 12th centuries; but he carefully treats the nun Hrosvitha as the first dramatist in the Germanic world, and "Ruodlieb" he justly calls the first document of real fiction in Europe.

Closely connected with his art of shading is Scherer's literary criticism. It is obvious that we must not expect long, critical explications in a handbook like this. Important works like the *Nibelungenlied*, *Gudrun*, *Percival*, *Werther*, *Wallenstein*, etc., receive a proportionate attention, and we cannot, in this respect, accept the groundless remark to the contrary by an English reviewer. The science of æsthetics has been cultivated in Germany more than anywhere else, each school of philosophy producing its own æsthetical code. Prof. Scherer, while accepting their permanent results, has fortunately kept himself free from any narrow philosophic standpoint. Nor was he impelled to do so by political or religious tendencies. His criticism, on the contrary, is founded upon a deep insight into the nature of poetry and the poetical art.

On various points we cannot agree with the author. His adherence to the somewhat

antiquated theory of Lachmann in respect to the origin of the *Nibelungenlied* seems to be rather a tribute of respect to his teacher Müllenhoff than in harmony with his own general conceptions. The criterion of the inequality of the different "Lieder" might be applied with equal justice to "Faust," if 800 years hence all accounts of Goethe should be lost. A more careful treatment of the development of German prose and the influence of the guild of the "Schreiber" upon it, would certainly have been an improvement to the work. We should wish further the picture of Schiller to be more in keeping with that of Scherer's favorite, Goethe. We also miss a careful analysis of Schiller's philosophical and æsthetic essays, without which his poetry can hardly be fully understood.

While our scientific convictions, however, may differ from Prof. Scherer's in minor points, we must acknowledge the justice with which he speaks of the foreign influence upon German poetry. It is a peculiar feature in the literary development of the German mind that it often too willingly yields to strange authorities, sometimes even losing its own independence. But the time of apparent imitation is mostly a time of assimilation to its own deep nature, which finally produces a regeneration of foreign ideas in distinctly German forms. The influence of French models upon German mediæval poetry is just as much proof for this assertion as the long study of the ancients with its result of a second great "Renaissance" for the German classics of the last century. How deeply transformed appears Rousseau's idea of nature in Germany, and how much more was German poetry affected by the idea of "Volks poesie" originally derived from England!

Gratefully acknowledging the various influences of other nations, Prof. Scherer pays thankful tribute also to the silent coöperation of noble German women in the poetic development of the nation. Those who adopt the Romance ideal of the cavalier as that of the only relation of man to woman, will be amazed at the rôle which the German woman plays in the Teutonic mind from Tacitus to our present time. And a deeper study will perhaps reveal to them treasures of feeling and poetry, sometimes unshapely, but always healthy, such as may even surpass the sentimentality and heartlessness

often concealed behind perfect forms. It is the purifying, the ennobling, the ethical influence of woman upon man and literature, which Scherer justly assigns to all the great periods of German literature.

The name of Prof. Max Müller vouches for the smooth and excellent translation of Mrs. Conybeare.

As the German language and literature are destined to be studied more from year to year, an attractive and trustworthy guide like this will prove of the greatest value. No real student of German literature should be without Prof. Scherer's master-work.

JULIUS GOEBEL.

Syntaktische Eigentümlichkeiten der Umgangssprache weniger gebildeter Pariser beobachtet in den Scènes populaires von Henri Monnier. Inaugural Dissertation von JULIUS SIEDE, Berlin. Mayer & Müller, 1885. 8vo, 66pp.

The citizen of the United States enjoys exceptionally good advantages for linguistic communication with his compatriots; for whether he go north, south, east or west, he finds about the same language spoken. Some little local coloring will be observable, which will take the form of peculiarity of intonation, broadening of vowel-sounds, drawl in pronunciation, and here and there words peculiar in themselves or peculiar in their special local use. We can not be said to have clearly defined dialects of American English; nor is it probable that we shall ever have, as our railroads, telegraphs, newspapers, above all our common school system, which carries the same vernacular into every household of the land, produce and keep up such a homogeneity of thoughts and interests in the whole mass of our population that the isolation necessary for dialectic growth will never exist. But there is a monster, which is looming up on the body linguistic and against which we need to be on our guard, namely, *slang*. Its proportions, at present, are comparatively small, but it is gradually creeping into our newspapers, books and periodicals, into the theatres, courts of justice, drawing-rooms, colleges, nay, even into our pulpits, and if we do not draw the lines a little more rigidly, we shall have to exclaim, as did Dumas, a few

years ago, under like circumstances, of the French language, *la langue anglaise est bien malade*.

"La langue française est bien malade" are not the mere words of a disgusted priest; they are literally and deplorably true. One who has been brought up, so to speak, on the language of the classic authors of the last and the preceding centuries, will often find himself sorely puzzled in the French capital of the present day, whether he be in the restaurants and cafés of the *Quartier Latin*, at the *Comédie française*, or in the best society. The "langue verte" is spoken everywhere and by almost every body. An enterprising restaurateur, some time ago, created no little sensation, and doubtless a considerable increase of trade, by displaying a placard containing, not *aquí se habla español*, or *English spoken here*, but *ici-caille on jaspine bigorne*. Sardou calls this monster the language of the future, and Francisque Michel, in his "Etudes de philologie comparée sur l'argot et les idiomes analogues," declares, he has no doubt but that it will eventually wholly usurp the place of the now fast becoming obsolete French proper. While this is surely going much too far, we must confess the statement is not without a strong basis of justification, when we find the most influential newspapers and the works of many of the best authors, not to mention Zola and his great train of naturalist followers, interlarded with argot.

The introduction of argot into literary works is doubtless traceable in no small degree to the influence of such writers as Balzac and Eugène Sue; for while their illiterate characters do not as a rule *dévident le jars*, still they speak a language not by any means classic, but in keeping with their social position. The Romanticists, with their exaggerations and license, tended strongly to bring classic form and elegance into disrepute; and it was but natural that the comic writers should go a step farther and admit into their plays, from the popular jargon, words and phrases that were capable of producing such striking effects. Whether these conjectures (for I give them only as such) be true or not, it is certain that by the middle of the present century slang had made such inroads into theatrical literature, that a vigorous outcry was raised against it, and Napoleon's secretary of state (Achille Fould), who had under his sur-